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Security Force Assistance in the Philippines

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Executive Summary

Title: Security Force Assistance in the Philippines

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Thesis: The involvement of the US conventional military's Security Force Assistance in the Philippines with significant future investment can build the foundation for comprehensive solutions that can stabilize the country, prevent future internal conflicts, and combat Philippine-grown insurgencies.

Discussion: Strategically located at the center of maritime Southeast Asia, the Philippines has endemic corruption and insurgency that have expanded and worsened despite over a hundred years of halfhearted US intervention. The Philippines has significant economic potential and rich resources. US participation and cooperation in the Philippines must be continued and enhanced. It takes time to develop trust and build partnership capacity in foreign militaries and even longer to eliminate corruption through careful spending and positive example. The battle with corruption at every level plagues democratic progress while inhibiting success in the fight against violent extremism. To achieve success in this environment the US must pursue long-term goals and be patient as the Philippines works through the political process. Realizing the context and the long-term approach, US Security Force Assistance in the Philippines with interagency participation can develop larger solutions for national stability, prevent future insurgencies, and dissipate the potential for terrorism.

Conclusion: Security Force Assistance applied effectively builds partnership capacity by training both US and foreign services in conventional and unconventional warfare through realistic training, ensuring that both nations become stronger warfighting instruments for each other's nations. In this light Security Force Assistance is the best daily application and use of US military force abroad to prevent future conflicts.

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Preface

This thesis is a result of my experiences in the Philippines during past deployments. I was in the advanced party for a Marine Expeditionary Unit's Medical and Dental assistance in Tawi Tawi in the southern Philippines during the summer of 2005. Additionally, during a later deployment, I had the opportunity to train with the Philippine Marine Corps and Army during PHIBLEX 2007 in Crow Valley training area in Luzon. These experiences made me aware of the threats, the challenges and the complexities associated with US assistance and engagement in the Philippines. This paper explores the situation in the Philippines and proposes an approach to improve and employ US Security Force Assistance in the best interests of US foreign policy.

I want to thank the Colonel Daniel Kelly, director of the Marine Corps' Center for Irregular Warfare, for providing recommendations in my research and analysis. Additionally, Col David Maxwell, USA who had been the commander of Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines assisted my understanding of the situation. I want to thank my mentor, Doctor Pauletta Otis, who provided excellent advice, and rudder steer. Finally and most importantly, I want to thank my wife, Miriam, for her patience, guidance and assistance.

Introduction

The involvement of the US conventional military's Security Force Assistance in the Philippines can build the foundation for comprehensive solutions to problems that with significant future investment can stabilize the country, prevent future internal conflicts, and combat Philippine-grown insurgencies.

Arguably the most important military component in the War on Terror is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we enable and empower our partners to defend and govern their own countries.

--Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates¹

Strategically located at the center of maritime Southeast Asia, the Philippines has endemic corruption and insurgency that have grown and worsened despite over a hundred years of halfhearted US intervention. The threats posed by insurgent groups in the Philippines have Al Qaeda ties and may have an impact on America. As a result Southeast Asia has become the second front in the Global War on Terrorism.² Like much of the region the Philippines has significant economic potential and rich resources, but the country has not grown financially since post-World War II independence. This stagnant national income contributes to the instability. The US government's aid in the region is often lost in translation and does not accomplish its intent. The US must apply military force through soft power, applying co-operation, emphasizing assistance and move away from hard power methods of coercion. Moving towards effective US Security Force Assistance with interagency participation will establish national stability and prevent future insurgencies.

The following chart shows the doctrinal relationships of US Assistance, Support, and Operations when working by, with, or through foreign nations:

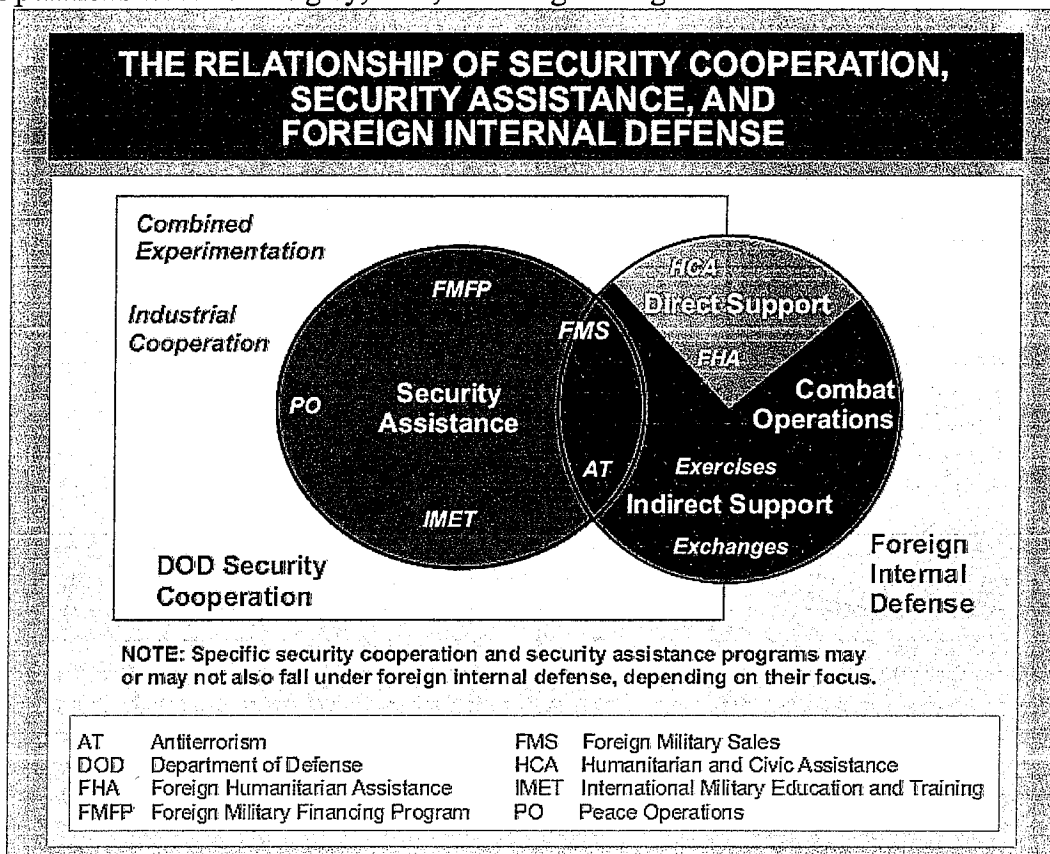


Figure I-4. The Relationship of Security Cooperation, Security Assistance, and Foreign Internal Defense

Definitions referenced in the appendix, including defining Security Force Assistance. Source: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID) Joint Publication 3-07.1 JP 3-07.1, page I-7.

I. Situation Analysis: Philippine Environment

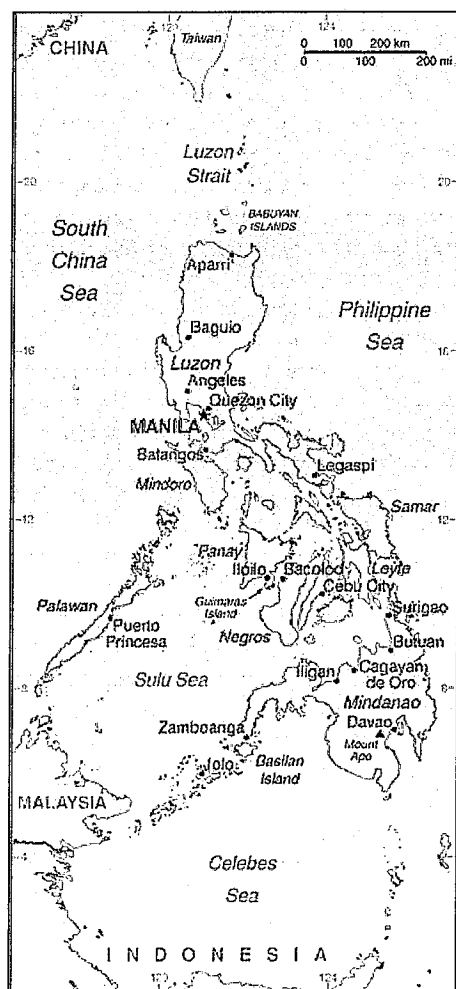
At first it all appeared to me to be a mirror image of America, but soon I learned that the mirrors reflected distorted images, like those at a carnival sideshow. If this was not Asia, neither was it America.

-In Our Image, Americas Empire in the Philippines, by Stanley Karnow³

The unusual connection between US and the Filipino political and military interests have been intertwined since Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt instructed Commodore George Dewey to attack the Spanish in the Philippines.

Subsequently Spain ceded the Philippines to the US in the Treaty of Paris, ending the Spanish American War in 1898.⁴ Before the US could successfully establish a colonial system of government in the islands it faced a significant insurgency. The Philippine Insurrection from 1899-1902 was an early foreshadowing of the challenge to US influence in the Philippines that has continued in a series of insurgencies throughout the twentieth century to the present. President McKinley's call for "benevolent assimilation" of the Philippines has never really come true.⁵

The following map of the Philippine Archipelago illustrates the remote southwestern Muslim areas including Jolo, Basilan and Zamboanga:



Source: The Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook: Philippines, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rp.html> (accessed February 20, 2009)

After the Philippine Insurrection was officially quelled in 1902, the US met resistance from the Islamic separatists in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago in the south of the Philippines. Like battles with the American Indians in the western US, this campaign produced heavy casualties of the “racially inferior” Islamic Moros and officially “ended” in 1915.⁶ The early efforts of Filipino forces vying for independence after the Spanish left were only the beginning of resistance forces that the US and legitimate Filipino governments were to face.

The government’s victory against the Philippine Hukbalahap Insurgency, which plagued the Philippines from 1946-1955, demonstrated successful US assistance and Filipino national precedence for democracy. Once appointed Philippines’ Secretary of National Defense in 1950, Ramon Magsaysay successfully eliminated the Hukbalahap insurgency by attacking its problems and not just the insurgents.⁷ Magsaysay’s anti-corruption and counterinsurgency efforts succeeded through a well designed comprehensive campaign of non-military solutions, maximizing the impact of US assistance, and improving the capability of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Long after the Huk rebellion, the Marcos presidency “unintentionally” enabled numerous disenfranchised insurgent groups, including the communists but also the Islamic Moros. The resistance of these groups to the government gave President Marcos an excuse to declare martial law and retain power for 21 years until 1986.⁸ The period of his dictatorship marked a decline in legitimacy of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the eyes of the population. Marcos granted promotions for loyalty in the AFP instead of ability and encouraged “corrupt patronage” at all levels of the military. Despite US financial assistance to the Philippines during this period, the harsh and brutal

tactics used by the AFP against locals “strengthened the insurgency the AFP was trying to quell.”⁹

This discussion takes us up to 2001. It’s important next to look at the insurgency and military in the Philippines which will be followed by investigating the situation since September 11, 2001.

Insurgency and Terrorism in the Philippines

Know the enemy and know yourself;
In a hundred battles you will never be in peril.
–Sun Tzu, The Art of War¹⁰

The democratic government that replaced the Marcos regime in 1986 retained the regime’s corruption and inefficiencies.¹¹ Organizations such as the Communist People’s Party and the militant wing, the New Peoples Army (NPA) attacked the new government’s inadequacies. The NPA was Christian-based and located throughout the country focusing in the rural areas, and it claimed to want to overthrow the “reactionary” government to establish a “democratic democracy.”¹² The NPA throughout the decades has conducted countless bombings and assassinations.¹³

The other significant insurgent organization was Muslim separatist groups from the “Bangsamoro,” which was the Muslim ethnic group “Moro.”¹⁴ These Muslims in the Southern Philippines successfully resisted Spanish colonial forces beginning in the seventeenth century.¹⁵ Despite the fighting in the early 20th century, the Muslims worked with US forces during World War II. The regions of Mindinao, and the Sulu Archipelago (including Sanga Sanga, and Tawi Tawi) were “strategically important” to the US because these were the sites of airfields used to attack the Japanese forces in

Borneo.¹⁶ Losing economic stability and political power after World War II, these people began to rise up and act as an insurgency, particularly during Marcos' presidency and subsequent dictatorship.

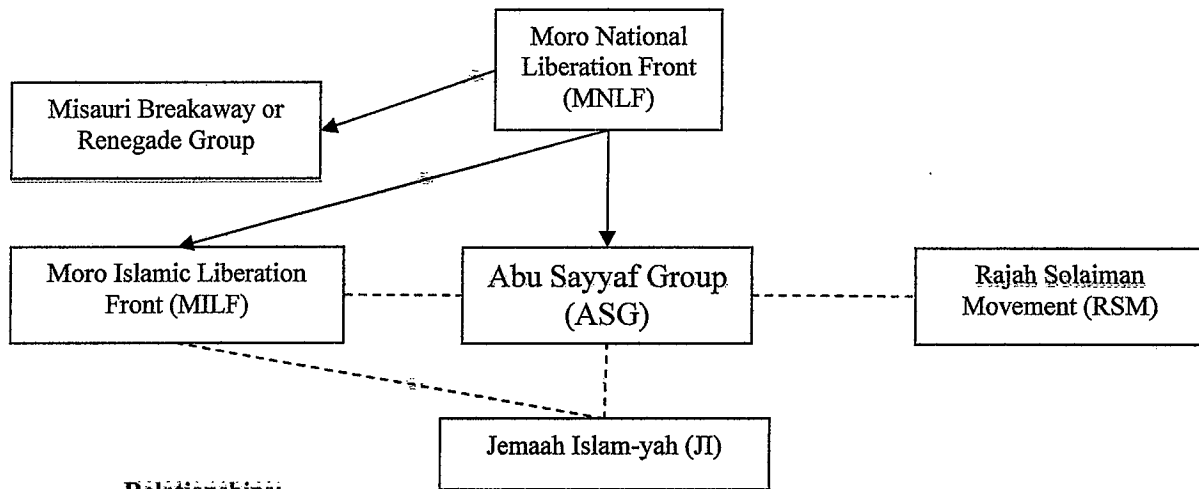
Religiously identified insurgent groups formed support among the population as a result of the same grievances that gave rise to the communist Huks: the desire for political independence, land rights, and economic enfranchisement.¹⁷ In a religious population that is over 91% Christian and only 5% Muslim, the Muslim Moro population was overwhelmingly outnumbered and reverted to insurgent tactics. The central Philippine government was generally uninterested because it was preoccupied with economic crises and corruption.¹⁸

Insurgent Moro Organizations

The insurgent Moro organizations are the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Jemaah Islam-yah (JI) and Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM).

This chart illustrates relationships between the Islamic Philippine Insurgent

Groups:



Relationships:

- > Broke from the parent organization
- - - - - Collaborations through sharing information, targets, facilities, or protection—joint operations

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was founded in the early 1970's demanding an independent Muslim state and responding to the increasing government sponsored settlement of Catholic Filipinos in Mindanao, which resulted in a Christian majority in traditionally Muslim islands.¹⁹ There was significant fighting and bloodshed between the MNLF and the AFP in the 1970's with over 120,000 killed.²⁰ The MNLF's willingness to attempt a settlement in the mid-1970s and accept a more lasting settlement in 1996 resulted in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).²¹ Although the ARMM is still in existence, MNLF broke its cease fire in 2001.²² The MNLF concessions with the Philippine government in the 1990's resulted in splintering and reinforcing dissident groups that have maintained violent insurgent tactics including the MILF and ASG.²³

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) broke from the MNLF in the mid 1970's "following a failed peace accord with the government."²⁴ Members of the MILF were unwilling to accept a peace accord and abandon the goal of an independent Muslim State.²⁵ The organization carried out insurgent attacks to achieve this goal reaching a height of operations in 1998-99. After facing significant AFP resistance, the MILF agreed to a cease fire with the Philippine Government in 2001.²⁶ Although these agreements reduced the number of significant MILF incidents, the agreements have not reduced growing collaboration with the ASG and JI.²⁷

Formed in 1990, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) operates primarily in the Sulu Archipeligo, in Western Mindanao and in Malaysia, with a traditional stronghold on the island of Jolo. The ASG is responsible for significant bombings, kidnappings, ambushes and executions.²⁸ Their goal is an independent Islamic state in the Southern Philippines.²⁹ This organization has a history on the water making them extremely adept with speed and "banca" boats.³⁰ The ASG worked with Ramzi Yoesef, mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombings and multiple other significant insurgent actions.³¹ Financial support of the ASG before September 11, 2001 was traced to Osama Bin Laden and the Al Qaeda terrorist organization.³² The ASG have ties to other insurgent organizations and commonly train on MILF facilities and have collaborated more recently with JI. ASG is listed by the State Department on the list of Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations.³³

Founded in 1993, Jemaah Islam-yah (JI) is a South East Asian militant Islamic organization, operating out of Malaysia, Philippines, Brunei, and Indonesia as the violent arm to establish the Islamic caliphate in South East Asia. JI was responsible for the

October, 2002 bombing of the Bali nightclub.³⁴ This organization's ties with the local Philippine insurgent organizations and Al Qaeda make it critical to the Global War on Terror for the United States. This organization is listed by the State Department on its list of Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations.³⁵

The Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM) is extremely militant and operates not only in Mindanao but also in Luzon. RSM calls for a "revert to Islam" claiming that the original religion of the Philippines was Islam.³⁶ This group includes a large number of people vitalized by Filipinos who had worked in the Middle East in order to make money for families. While in the Middle East, many of these individuals turned toward fundamentalist Islamic religion and translated that back to the Philippines in order to solve their discontent.³⁷ The RSM routinely collaborate with ASG.

All of these insurgent groups are relatively small in number but have significant influence. The insurgents possess the ability to shock the population through terror tactics. Insurgents require money and generate operating funds which explain activities such as ASG ransom activities. All of these activities must be targeted through AFP denial activities of insurgent sanctuaries, government action and imposed social changes. Therefore, Security Assistance with the Filipino military helps erode this support undercutting the population's motivation to join such groups.

Philippine Military Approach

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been fighting insurgencies since before the independence of the Philippines and has extensive experience with some decent successes. As a service, the AFP is often required to focus on internal security

threats rather than on external security. The AFP brings a wealth of experience to the fight against Muslim separatist groups. The successes of the AFP have shown this throughout history, whether it was in the fights against the Huk Communists or against the Abu Sayyaf leadership. Unfortunately, corruption, funds, and interagency inadequacies undermine the AFP's ability to cleanse its country of the insurgent threat effectively. The AFP's forces are seasoned and experienced but lack the equipment and high tech gear required to interdict insurgents successfully. Constantly attempting this interdiction, the conventional forces of the AFP, consisting of the Army and Marine Corps, are constantly participating in operations in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

Conventional Forces

The AFP includes around 110,000 active service members but is under-funded and is in desperate need of modernization.³⁸ The majority of the Philippine military differs in culture, religion, and geography from the Muslim separatists. As a result, military personnel may not respect the alienation felt by Moros. The AFP military has gone through cycles of relative prosperity and drought throughout Philippine history. Historically when the military becomes most capable, it also becomes most dangerous to the central government. The Magsaysay era built up and improved the military. The Marcos era pumped money into the military but tainted its promotion practices and long term legitimacy and effectiveness. Since that period US bases and the respective influence, training, and money left the islands and the US reduced its funding. The Philippine military further declined in professionalism, morale, capabilities, and quality.³⁹ Since September 11, 2001, and the commencement of the Global War on Terror, the US

has invested significant effort to revitalize the Philippine military for successful counterinsurgency operations. Nonetheless the AFP is limited by its own corruption. There is an “uneven” quality in the Philippine military.⁴⁰

Intelligence

Government intelligence and especially military intelligence have required US assistance in the Philippines.⁴¹ Although the government and military have a National Intelligence Coordination Agency (NICA), Military Intelligence Group, Intelligence Services of AFP, and National Bureau of Investigation (Department of Justice), these organizations are not adequately funded and are not reliable in gathering, and processing information. Adequate funding and “hands on” international training will build skills and capability that the Philippine Intelligence services are currently lacking. Corruption in this area is devastating and needs to be eliminated.

Police

A credible police force is critical to maintaining the peace. The Philippine National Police (PNP) numbering 114,000 in active strength, are designed to take responsibility for the counterinsurgency role from AFP after the insurgency is contained.⁴² The police currently play a supporting role in the counterinsurgency process. These police require appropriate Security Force Assistance from US Police to enable capabilities and improve effectiveness.

II. US Role, Responsibility, and Interests

We will support, train, advise and equip partner security forces to counter insurgencies, terrorism, proliferation, and other threats. We will assist other countries in improving their capabilities through security cooperation, just as we will learn valuable skills and information from others better situated to understand some of the complex challenges we face together.

--National Defense Strategy 2008⁴³

The US government is increasingly aware of the need to increase conduct of Security Cooperation across the globe in order to prevent wars and insurgent attacks, and to assist other countries in taking care of internal problems. Effective Security Force Assistance aids in the accomplishment of multiple US security and foreign policy goals including "supporting the Global War on Terror, promoting stronger bilateral relationships, strengthening self-defense capabilities, and promoting greater respect for democracy and human rights."⁴⁴

Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates has indicated in his 2008 National Defense Strategy a shift in focus toward improving US Security Cooperation and Security Force Assistance around the globe.⁴⁵ The US is building and teaching the indigenous military and police forces to be able to operate reliably and independently, and to uphold the peace. The Security Cooperation landscape is undeniably changing and this development in focus must be practiced throughout the world.⁴⁶ The benefits of effective Security Cooperation and Assistance can only be measured in long term stability.

The services have responded to Secretary Gates' call for increased Security Cooperation. For example, the Marine Corps has always been skilled at working with other countries through its deployments and its Marine Expeditionary Unit program. To meet the increased requirement for working by, with, and through other nations, the

Marine Corps has designed the Security Cooperation Marine Air Ground Task Force (SC MAGTF). This solution provides employment opportunities for a post Iraq and Afghanistan Marine Corps that takes advantage of increased numbers of personnel and units. Conceptually the Marine Corps intends to develop Regiments with cultural and linguistic expertise in particular regions. Conceptually, Combatant Commanders request units with this expertise to those regions in order to build partner capacity. Marine Corps response to the National Defense Strategy indicates a national capability to increase Security Cooperation and Assistance training world wide including in the Philippines.

September 11, 2001 Impact on the Philippines

After September 11, 2001, Philippine President Arroyo requested US help in combating Islamic terrorism in the Southern Philippines. As part of the Global War on Terror, she worked to reap the financial benefits for her country and to re-establish a bilateral relationship with the US.⁴⁷ Although AFP commanders supported the more direct US role, she met disagreement in the Philippine legislature.⁴⁸ Because of the legacy between the US and the Philippines, there was natural sensitivity to US influence on Philippine sovereignty and domestic affairs.⁴⁹ Although in the initial plans it appeared that the US would take more of a combat role in the fight with Abu Sayyaf, there was serious disagreement from inside the Philippine government. As a result, President Arroyo curtailed the US's role to be advisory in nature.⁵⁰ The participation of US forces as trainers and advisors was captured under a traditional bi-lateral Security Force Assistance exercise called "Balikitan," which means "shoulder to shoulder."

The post-September 11th impetus for enhanced US involvement in the Philippines was the link between ASG and Al Qaeda in the Global War on Terror. Additionally justifying the involvement was that kidnapping of an American missionary couple, the Brunhams, by ASG during this time.⁵¹ The recovery of the Brunhams, undertaken by Philippine military, was able to save the wife and an additional hostage but the husband was killed in the recovery attempt. Appearing as a failure for the Philippine government, this incident justified the US requests to be involved in the actual recovery. Failures such as these identify the complexity of the situation in the Philippines, the inadequacies of the AFP, and the delicate and complicated nature of international relations with respect to Security Force Assistance. Nonetheless, the US did meet success in building and advising AFP capability and the AFP did weaken ASG, which saw a fall in numbers from 1000 in 2002 to 200-400 in 2006.⁵² Unfortunately, corruption in the AFP detracted from success. In multiple examples, surrounded ASG fighters were able to bribe officials ensuring their escape. Although the ASG was getting smaller, reports were showing an increased “cooperation” between ASG, MILF and JI.⁵³ This situation required military involvement in the form of US Security Force Assistance.

This Security Force Assistance relationship between the US and the Philippines was based on economic assistance and security enhancement for the Philippines. In the process the US provided more aid to the Philippines than to any other nation in Southeast Asia.⁵⁴ Between 2001 and 2004 the US provided around \$175 million to train and equip the security forces in the Philippines.⁵⁵ If the Philippines used the tools effectively, it received significant military enhancement as a result of September 11th.

During this post September 11th period, the US used Exercise Balikitan as a significant vehicle to both train AFP and develop situational awareness to help the AFP pursue and interdict Abu Sayyaf. In "Balikitan 2002" part of the traditional US/Philippines joint exercise focused on traditional AFP training in the Northern Islands. This helped distract attention from the other part focused on Abu Sayyaf and deployed to the Southern Philippines with US troops including Special Operations personnel and Navy Engineers. The Navy Engineers were used to conduct popular civic action projects such as well-digging and road building on the island Basilan in the Sulu Archipelago. This helped neutralize support for Abu Sayyaf among the local population.⁵⁶ US and Philippine government discussion and finally decisions were too late to make a difference, due to the exercise timeline, about US Special Operations personnel being permitted to advise selected units during combat operations in the field.⁵⁷ On the positive side US goals were accomplished and Security Force Assistance in the Philippines was opened and advanced. The units that were operating around Basilan learned more assertive patrolling techniques, had more encounters with Abu Sayyaf, and began the erosion of Abu Sayyaf strength.⁵⁸

In describing this 2002 training a senior advisor to President Bush said, "We're looking at prolonged training. It takes more to build up capabilities than saying, 'Here are some night vision goggles.'" ⁵⁹ This statement exemplifies the requirement for required US training involvement and the need for building partnership capacity in coordination with providing new equipment. Patience and providing quality training are important aspects of improving the Philippines operational capabilities. Successful improvement requires time, trainers, money, and dedication to see positive results.

Despite successes during the first post September 11th Balikatan in 2002 the Philippine force failed to capitalize on what it had learned so recently and failed to “maintain the momentum.”⁶⁰ Security Force Assistance training takes time and dedicated assets to create positive results. Attempting to reestablish this momentum and capitalize on what had been learned and agreed upon during the 2002 exercise, the US participated in a 2003 Balikatan focusing on Jolo, another island in the Sulu Archipelago. This exercise on Jolo reignited a haunted cultural memory of the US. In the early days of the 20th century soon after the US had ended the Philippine war and had begun governing the islands, Brigadier General Leonard Wood and then Captain John J. Pershing were fighting the Moro Islamic rebels inflicting thousands of casualties on the civilian population.⁶¹ Although it had started with open ended duration and US combat participation, unfortunately US military exercises were halted due to political backlash.⁶²

Although this process had a rocky start, it began to improve over the years as both the US and the Philippines became familiar with each other’s expectations. Balikatan has continued to take place over the following years. The US began to focus energy toward training the AFP light infantry companies for fighting the Muslim insurgents.⁶³ Additionally, these exercises opened the door for Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines long term focus and forward presence out of Zamboanga, Mindanao. Significant successes of military action include the death of the Abu Sayyaf leader, Khadaffy Janjalani, in a firefight on the island of Jolo in the Sulu Archipelago in late 2006 and fragmenting the Abu Sayyaf leadership.⁶⁴

III. Perfect Scenario-What should happen

The commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan require Security Force Assistance skills particularly in training countries' militaries and police forces to protect people from insurgents. These commitments have prevented the US military from dedicating the personnel and assets to address worldwide Security Cooperation and Assistance. The justification for any allotment of troops to the Philippines has been the visible insurgent threat. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan require fewer troops, these Security Force Assistance responsibilities must be maintained, continued, and further developed.

Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower⁶⁵

Eisenhower's simple but un-dictionary definition for leadership identifies the role of leadership that the US must conduct with other nations. In these other nations, such as the Philippines, targeting the military to build partnership capacity is direct and may prevent future warfare. The cost is worth time, money, and manpower creating value in trained foreign militaries. Obviously there is a prerequisite that US military personnel providing this assistance must first know the trade. These forces must also be culturally aware of the Philippines or any other nation the forces train with. This is a long term benefit as it develops cultural capabilities in our forces and teaches lifelong cultural awareness. In addition, the US must include Humanitarian and Civic Assistance in these exercises. Through helping in multiple of ways such as building schools, and providing medical and dental assistance in underdeveloped regions, the democratic governments begin to win people over away from participating in insurgent activities. The long term participation in military to military alliance relationships through overseas exercises also

supports interoperability between services, supporting future coalitions and alliances if warfare does become a necessity. Ultimately, the training is worth the cost as trained foreign forces can accomplish internal defense and anti-terrorism, preventing future conflicts across the long term.

This trip is not just about fighting terrorism. It's about fighting poverty.
--President Arroyo press conference with President Bush in May, 2003.⁶⁶

Poverty in the southern reaches of the Philippines is the root of the lack of peace. In an already poor nation, the Southern Philippines is the poorest region. The Muslim population will turn to "armed rebellion" until it is given the opportunity for another more lucrative outlet.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, money alone provided by an outside government to aid the Southern Philippines will not solve all of the problems.

Pervasive corruption cripples the Philippine economy and hinders efficient governance.

--The Asia Foundation⁶⁸

The Philippines have demonstrated this problem on multiple occasions. For example, money sent by the US government during the pre-Magsaysay days for anti communism was consumed by the government in corruption. Additionally money sent by the US government during the Marcos days was likewise abused by the dictator's regime. This corruption can be viewed as a constant in Philippine politics. It has allowed the rich and empowered to continue to take advantage of the system. The culture of corruption must be changed slowly and through positive example. US troops or interagency trainers, designed to set the example, should be tied to economic benefits for the Philippine government. In order to make more valuable investments, money must be attached to realistic and valid training in order to set the Philippine military and government up for

success. In order to see success, changes must not be made just to the military but to the entire Philippine government and society.

Training

Trainers must be better prepared for this environment in order to provide the most significant impact in conducting Security Force Assistance. The most difficult balance in conventional force preparation for a deployment is to balance regional specialty and cultural training with traditional warfighting requirements. These units must be able to cover the spectrum from conducting Security Force Assistance with the AFP to conducting offensive combat operations. This balance requires efficiency and direction in any type of pre-deployment regional specialty and cultural training. Additionally it requires flexibility in the trainers and the training medium. Often the best place to conduct this type of training with dedicated time for Marines is aboard ship during transits between locations. This training is immediately applicable, and the full attention of the unit can be focused. This also requires the training cadre to be available for this type of pre-event training and in the absence of the trainers, requires the information to be accessible (secret or non-secret internet), easily taught, and digestible by the using unit. With today's communications this should be easy to accomplish, however it also requires reach-back access to experts while on the job. The experts can be back in the states but available to answer questions such as information on a particular Philippine Moro custom or ethnic makeup of a village in order to mitigate cultural complexities.

Tracking

In addition to facilitating adequate training for Security Force Assistance training with foreign militaries such as the Philippines there needs to be a way for the military and the Marine Corps in particular to track its expertise. This would help in placing people in the right units and give manpower the knowledge of which units have which imbedded capabilities. These tracking requirements could easily be added to the electronic personnel file that can be tracked and collated when needed. Currently if a Marine is fluent in a language they get tested to receive special pay. Although this is designed to track skills it requires a threshold of language aptitude. Now aptitude can be developed or started with Rosetta Stone software, which has been made more accessible to learn languages. There should be a system to track the service members graduated improvements in these skills including language but also cultural awareness. Service members require incentives for training and the system requires tracking mechanisms to follow up, record capabilities, and develop usable databases for manpower.

In order to further these international capabilities in the military there must be further tracking systems on international officers who have attended US schools. The Philippines sends students to multiple US service schools such as Command and Staff College each year but there must be tracking systems to follow up. The US government should track these officers progression after school. Additionally the US should track sponsors and close friends to these foreign officers who could provide excellent links for future operations or training in the future. These should be tracked in these service databases.

Equipment

In order to facilitate international training with foreign countries, interoperable equipment makes the process more worthwhile and seamless. Although on the surface this may appear simple, it is often overlooked. Understanding the equipment becomes a complex aspect of teaching another force. For example in training the Philippine Marine Corps, complex data must be understood about Philippine Mortar tubes and rounds in order to provide assistance on Fire Direction Control procedures. As the equipment is more interoperable the training value improves for both the trainer and trainee. If they share the same equipment, mortars and rounds, the training for both forces becomes more effective and easier to translate.

Humanitarian Assistance

A critical complement to Security Force Assistance in the Philippines or elsewhere is Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA). This assistance can be applied through providing Medical or Dental assistance to remote regions. Additionally construction and engineering projects can improve the living conditions for the population. Indigenous doctors, dentists, workers and materials improve this process developing a local feel to the assistance. Additionally medically oriented Non-Governmental Organizations should also be welcomed into the process. Collaborative efforts in these assistance events are designed to help ensure credit rests with the indigenous government and military.

Interagency

Our partnerships must be capable of applying military and non-military power when and where needed –a prerequisite against an adaptable transnational enemy.
--National Defense Strategy 2008⁶⁹

The goals of stability and democracy cannot be achieved by the conventional military alone. Military assistance is only a small part of helping solve a country's problems.⁷⁰ After combined exercises with the Philippines, US analysts determined that the Philippine government was focusing on the military solution only. The US support provided military assistance in combating Abu Sayyaf but ignored the complexity of a working interagency solution. The Filipinos made no attempt to improve intelligence and police services which are poorly funded and critical to a long term solution.⁷¹ Financial aid alone will continue to corrupt the Philippine government. Effective Security Force Assistance includes interagency roles to provide the Philippines the full opportunities of suitable and reliable systems to solve problems. Assistance from the US Department of Justice, Treasury, and State should be fully incorporated in all military training. Unfortunately the US Department of Defense does a better job of "vetting in training programs" to insure that the recipients are credible for US support and are training the people who need it.⁷² Transparency and accountability should be improved and interagency assistance should become an essential element to national Security Cooperation with another nation, and particularly the Philippines.

Special Forces

Special Forces offer a unique capacity for this type of Security Force Assistance training but must not be seen as the panacea. First these troops are expensive and are

limited in number. Special Forces require extensive training and require certain type of personnel. Special Forces have competing missions in the community that are always drawing them away from building partnership capacity in seemingly benign countries. Special Forces will always be drawn toward combat as a result of capability, appeal, and national funding. This is currently happening with units in Iraq and Afghanistan drawing the preponderance of attention and money. The excitement of kicking down doors in kinetic operations draws more interest than traditional and usually frustrating military advising. Additionally taxpayers' money is more beneficial in improving conventional forces that can accomplish multiple functions. A better trained conventional force that can advise and fight on the front lines of future battles would serve this multipurpose. Conventionally interoperable forces promote coalition building and coalition fighting which brings credibility and international backing to settle a dispute. Additionally leaders and members of this conventional military force will make better educated civilians and contributors to society at the end of enlistments.

IV. Conclusion

Although our force can surge when necessary to respond to crises, trust and cooperation cannot be surged.

--USN, USMC, and USCG Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century⁷³

US participation and cooperation in the Philippines must be continued and enhanced. It takes time to develop trust and build partnership capacity in foreign militaries and even longer to eliminate corruption through careful spending and positive example. The battle with corruption at every level plagues democratic progress while inhibiting success in the fight against violent extremism.⁷⁴ To meet success in this

environment the US must pursue long term goals and be patient as the Philippines works through the political process. Realizing the context and the long term approach, US Security Force Assistance in the Philippines with interagency participation develops larger solutions for national stability, prevents future insurgencies, and dissipates the potential for terrorism. Units from the USMC and Navy team have provided an effective instrument, when available, for Pacific Command in Security Force Assistance during Balikitan, PHIBLEX, and countless other medical, dental and engineering assistance exercises in the Philippines.

Security Force Assistance applied effectively builds partnership capacity through training both US and foreign services in conventional and unconventional warfare through realistic training, ensuring that both nations become stronger warfighting instruments for each other's nations. In this light Security Force Assistance is the best daily application and use of US military force abroad to prevent future conflicts.

Appendix A: Acronyms and Definitions

Acronyms:

AFP—Armed Forces of the Philippines
ASG—Abu Sayyaf Group
ARMM—Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
CPP—Communist People's Party
HCA—Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA)
JI—Jemmah Islam-yah (JI)
MILF—Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF—Moro National Liberation Front
NPA—New People's Army
PNP—Philippine National Police

Glossary:

Foreign Internal Defense. Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. Also called FID. (JP 1-02)

irregular warfare. A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will. Also called IW. (Proposed) according to Irregular Warfare, Joint Operational Concept ver 1.0, 11 SEP 2007

security assistance — Group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives. Also called SA. See also security assistance organization; security cooperation. DOD Dictionary (JP 1-02)

security assistance organization—All Department of Defense elements located in a foreign country with assigned responsibilities for carrying out security assistance management functions. It includes military assistance advisory groups, military missions and groups, offices of defense and military cooperation, liaison groups, and defense attaché personnel designated to perform security assistance functions. Also called SAO. (JP 1-02)

security cooperation — All Department of Defense interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational

operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation. See also security assistance; security assistance organization. (JP 3-07.1)

Security Force Assistance (SFA)—Unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host nation or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority. (Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance, Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance)

special operations forces—Those Active and Reserve Component forces of the Military Services designated by the Secretary of Defense and specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. Also called SOF. (JP 1-02)

Appendix B: Chronology

- 1542 Spanish expedition claims islands and names Philippines.
- 1898 Spain cedes Philippines to the US as a result of Spanish American War.
- 1899 Insurgent activity against US forces begins.

- 1902 US civil government replaces military rule.
- 1915 Fight with Islamic Moro insurgency ends.
- 1941 Japan invades Philippines.
- 1944 US forces retake the islands at the end of WWII.
- 1953 Magsaysay elected President of Philippines after success against Huks.
- 1965 Marcos elected President.
- 1969 Marcos re-elected amidst allegations of electoral fraud.
Muslim separatists begin campaign of guerrilla war.
- 1972 Marcos declares martial law.
- 1986 AFP withdraws support for Marcos. Marcos flees country.
- 1991 US abandons Clark Air Force Base after Mount Pinatubo volcanic eruption.
- 1992 US closes Subic Bay Naval Station.
- 1996 Peace Agreement with MNLF. MILF carries on its campaign.

- 2001 MILF declares ceasefire and says it is ready to hold talks with the government.
- 2002 Exercises between US and Philippine military occur near ASG stronghold.
- 2003 Agreed ceasefire with MILF.
- 2005 January—Heavy fighting between MILF and AFP breaks 2003 ceasefire.
- 2005 December—Significant AFP / ASG clashes on southern island of Jolo.
- 2007 January—ASG leader Khaddafy Janjalani confirmed killed in 2006 fighting.
- 2007 April—AFP steps up offensive against ASG after group beheading of 7 hostages.
- 2008 July—MILF deal reaches agreement on expansion of ARMM.
- 2008 August—MILF deal collapses after renewed fighting on Mindanao

Source: BBC News, "Timeline: Philippines," <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1264117.stm> (accessed March 9, 2009).

Notes:

¹ Robert M. Gates, US Secretary of Defense, Remarks at Association of the United States Army, (speech, Washington, DC, October 10, 2007), <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1181> (accessed January 9, 2008).

² US Government Accountability Office, *Southeast Asia: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces: GAO-05-793*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2005, 1.

³ Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: First Ballantine Books Edition: 1990), 361.

⁴ Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace, Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002), 103 and Arthur Power Dudden, *The American Pacific, From the Old China Trade to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 82.

⁵ Karnow, 197. Dudden, 89.

⁶ Walley, 6 and Larry Niksch, *Abu Sayyaf: Target of Philippine-U.S. Anti-Terrorism Cooperation*, CRS Report for Congress RL31265. (Washington, DC Congressional Research Service, January 24, 2007), 2, and Dudden, 88-89.

⁷ Initially, the fledgling and mismanaged Filipino government failed to deal effectively with the growing communist Hukbalahap insurgency on the Luzon mainland. The complicated situation of the communist Hukbalahap Insurgency required a comprehensive solution to the Philippines' post-war economic, political, and social problems. Magsaysay believed in democracy, understood insurgency as a former pro-US/ anti-Japanese insurgent and believed that military operations alone would not defeat the insurgents. His reputation as an anti-corruption democratic leader was critical in quelling the insurgency. Lawrence M. Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection: A Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines, 1946-1955* (Washington DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 1995), 3, 101.

⁸ Cherilyn A. Walley, "A Century of Turmoil: America's Relationship with the Philippines," *Special Warfare*, September, 2004, 9.

⁹ Ronald E. Dolan, Federal Research Division Library of Congress, and United States Deptment of the Army, *Philippines : A Country Study*, 4th ed., (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Deptment of the Army, 1993), 54-55 and Walley, 9.

¹⁰ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Translated by Samuel B. Griffith. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969; 1963), 84.

¹¹ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity and United States Department of Defense Intelligence Production Program, *Philippines: Country Handbook, Field-Ready Reference Publication* (Washington, DC: Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, March 2008), 104.

¹² United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 104-105.

¹³ Although activity against the US slowed since the US base closings in the Philippines in 1992, the NPA is designated by the US State Department as a Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. United States Government Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations, United States Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103714.htm>, (accessed January, 20, 2009).

¹⁴ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 46. The Moros were named by the Spanish colonialists because they resembled the Islamic Moors of North Africa. Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990), 194.

¹⁵ Niksch, 2.

¹⁶ Walley, 8.

¹⁷ Ibid., and United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 46.

¹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, World Fact Book, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rp.html#People>, (Accessed January, 20, 2009). Insurgent groups over the past three decades have been difficult "multifaceted" organizations with varying agendas. Niksch, 1. Additionally radical Islam has spread in recent years from Filipino workers who have worked in the Middle East. Ibid., 7.

¹⁹ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 106, and Niksch, 2.

²⁰ Ibid..

²¹ The 1996 cease fire between the Philippine Government and MNLF subsequently collapsed in 2001 resulting in more attacks. United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 46.

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- ²² United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 46.
- ²³ Niksch, 2, 3.
- ²⁴ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 106.
- ²⁵ Niksch, 2.
- ²⁶ Ibid., These negotiations continue to occur regarding the expansion of the ARMM. United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 107.
- ²⁷ Niksch, 9.
- ²⁸ Niksch, 3 (also Philippine Daily Inquirer July 29, 1994, page 1). The ASG leadership claims ties with the Afghani Mujahideen who fought the Soviets. United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 107.
- ²⁹ Ibid..
- ³⁰ Ibid., 108.
- ³¹ Niksch, 5.
- ³² Ibid., 4.
- ³³ U.S. Government Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations, United States Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103714.htm> (accessed January, 20, 2009).
- ³⁴ Niksch, 6.
- ³⁵ U.S. Government Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations, United States Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103714.htm> (accessed January, 20, 2009).
- ³⁶ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 107.
- ³⁷ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 109.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 111.
- ³⁹ Walley, 10.
- ⁴⁰ Niksch, 8.
- ⁴¹ Niksch, 11, 12, 14.
- ⁴² United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 137.
- ⁴³ United States Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy 2008*, (Washington, D.C.: 2008), 15-16.
- ⁴⁴ US Government Accountability Office, *Southeast Asia: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces: GAO-05-793*, 1.
- ⁴⁵ The current US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have become this form of endeavor, focusing on Security Cooperation and Security Force Assistance.
- ⁴⁶ J. P. Hesford, and Paul Askins, "U.S. Marine Corps Security Cooperation," *Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Journal of International Security Assistance Management* 30, no. 3 (2008): 5.
- ⁴⁷ Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 203.
- ⁴⁸ Niksch, 10. and V, 203.
- ⁴⁹ Walley, 4.
- ⁵⁰ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 71, and Niksch, 10.
- ⁵¹ Niksch, 11. The US failed in getting these hostages safely from the insurgents. The negotiations slowed combat operations and Money was eventually paid in a "failed ransom attempt." Later when forces went in to get the hostages, the husband and a Filipino hostage were killed. The wife was rescued.
- ⁵² Niksch, 4.
- ⁵³ Niksch, 15.
- ⁵⁴ United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 85.
- ⁵⁵ United States Government Accountability Office, *Southeast Asia: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces: GAO-05-793*, 2,10.
- ⁵⁶ Niksch, 10,12 and Abuza, 204.
- ⁵⁷ Niksch, 10-11. Negotiations involving Secretary Rumsfeld finally settled on complex rules of two man teams of US Special Forces that were permitted to participate as advisors in operations. This decision was finally made in the summer of 2002 when the Baliktan Exercise was over.
- ⁵⁸ Niksch, 11.
- ⁵⁹ Jane Perlez, "U.S. Antiterror Forces May Extend Stay on Philippines Island," *New York Times*, March 31, 2002.

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- ⁶⁰ Abuza, 205.
- ⁶¹ Niksch, 13.
- ⁶² Abuza, 205 and Niksch, 13.
- ⁶³ Niksch, 13.
- ⁶⁴ Khadaffi Janjalani was on the US Federal Bureau of Investigation Most Wanted Terrorists list. United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 72.
- ⁶⁵ Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance, *Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Joint Center for Security Force Assistance, July 14, 2008), 11.
- ⁶⁶ Abuza, 212.
- ⁶⁷ Abuza, 210.
- ⁶⁸ The Asia Foundation. "Philippines Overview."
<http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/philippines0408.pdf> (assessed February 19, 2009).
- ⁶⁹ National Defense Strategy 2008, 16.
- ⁷⁰ United States Department of the Army, and United States Marine Corps, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006), 2-10.
- ⁷¹ Abuza, 210.
- ⁷² US Government Accountability Office, *Southeast Asia: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces: GAO-05-793*, GAO Summary Page.
- ⁷³ United States Navy, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, (Washington, D.C.: October, 2007), ii.
- ⁷⁴ The Arroyo government is currently taking steps to revise the Philippine Constitution in order to "reduce endemic official corruption," energize the economy, and quiet the Muslim insurgency in the Southern Philippines. These efforts are unlikely to be successful despite the Arroyo government's apparent good intentions. Political rivals see these proposals by the presidency as corrupt attempts to consolidate and hold on to power. These political rivals may be correct. This exemplifies the complexity of the problems in the Philippines. "Asia: Charter Members; The Philippine Constitution." *The Economist*, December 6, 2008, 62.

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